



# News Release

National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 23, 2020

### National Guard Response to COVID-19

This morning, 43,300 Air and Army National Guard professionals were supporting the COVID-19 response at the direction of their governors.

Forty states, three territories and the District of Columbia have been approved for use of federal funds for state missions under Title 32, providing governors with greater flexibility and ensuring National Guard troops remain in the fight longer.

"I was talking with a young soldier one time and asked, 'Hey, is this (deployment) hard on you and your family?' He said, 'I volunteered the day I put the uniform on.' That says a lot about the people who come and work for us," said Gen. Joseph Lengyel, chief of the National Guard Bureau. "If you ever wanted to consider an organization to join, convince your friends the Air and Army National Guard is the place to be -- with the added benefit of being called to duty in times of crisis at home."

National Guard priorities are COVID-19 testing and screening as well as providing logistical support through warehousing and distribution of medical supplies and food. National Guard members are uniquely qualified to support civil authorities in the communities they live and work.



Airman 1st Class Arielle Robles, administration specialist, 103rd Maintenance Group, Connecticut National Guard, helps set up recovery center beds at Kaiser Hall at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut, April 21. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)

Connecticut National Guard Airman 1st Class Arielle Robles, 103rd Maintenance Group administration specialist, typically reports to Kaiser Hall for her exercise science classes at Central Connecticut State University. Now she is helping turn the gym floor into a COVID-19 recovery center.

"It's crazy to see that where we would normally go for class or to work out is being turned into a field hospital, but it feels good to be helping the community and my school in this way," said Robles.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/2159477/guard-member-supports-covid-19-response-at-her-university/>

While the fight against COVID-19 requires each individual to do their part, it also takes unwavering leadership. This is something that sets the state of Minnesota apart from the rest. Some of the most engaged decision-makers during this crisis share a common bond: They served in the Minnesota National Guard.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz served in the Army National Guard for 24 years, achieving the rank of command sergeant major. He served overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and was the highest-ranking enlisted National Guard soldier in southern Minnesota when he retired from 1st Battalion, 125th Field Artillery in 2005.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/2161046/once-in-the-guard-always-ready-to-serve/>

Current National Guard COVID-19 response missions include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting warehouse operations and logistics efforts to help deliver and distribute lifesaving medical equipment and critical supplies;
- Delivering and distributing food in hard-hit communities and supporting food banks;
- Working with industry and civilian partners to satisfy demand for personal protective equipment used by essential staff and first responders;
- Providing mortuary affairs assistance as needed, Guardsmen conduct this important mission with respect and dignity;
- Building and outfitting alternate care facilities to alleviate stress on medical infrastructure;
- Augmenting medical staff at hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living facilities to protect our most vulnerable populations;
- Manufacturing, sewing and distributing masks and other PPE for mission essential personnel;
- Full-time, 24-hour state Emergency Operations Center staffing to synchronize National Guard efforts with local and state mission partners to plan and execute an effective response;
- Providing time saving support to local law enforcement, freeing officers to perform their duties in the communities they serve;
- Conducting traffic control support and helping manage foot traffic in public spaces and community shelters;
- Manning call centers to be a knowledgeable and calming voice;
- Providing vital PPE training and delivery to civilian first responders;
- Conducting force health protection assessments to ensure our Guardsmen are cared for;
- Performing mobile testing and sample delivery;
- Providing support and symptoms screening to testing facilities and passenger terminals;
- Disinfecting facilities crucial to the bottom line mission of saving lives

The National Guard Bureau facilitates integration and synchronization of National Guard support to civil authorities and associated planning between states, the Department of Defense and federal partners. Guard units frequently train side-by-side with state and local emergency responders, making them well-suited for domestic operations.

The National Guard's Coordination Center is a 24 / 7 operation working at increased capacity in anticipation of COVID-19 requirements and to ensure unified and rapid response efforts between its state and federal partners. The National Guards of the 50 states, three territories and the District of Columbia have a very deep bench of nearly 450,000 experienced and proven Air and Army National Guard professionals.

National Guard members work and live in every community across the nation and have a proven track record of success supporting civilian authorities after homeland emergencies. The National Guard has unique capabilities such as its Civil Support Teams that could provide local first responders with additional resources to combat COVID-19.

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#### **National Guard COVID-19 Response Efforts and State PAO Contact Information:**

State priorities continue to focus on supporting community-based testing sites, creating additional medical capacity, and providing logistical support to include transportation and distribution of PPE, medical supplies and food.

The depth and breadth of knowledge and skills the National Guard brings to the COVID-19 fight is making a difference in the communities they serve; it is truly neighbors helping neighbors.

#### **Alabama:**

The Alabama National Guard is conducting infection control missions in designated long-term care facilities to include nursing and veterans' homes throughout the state. Additionally, the Alabama National Guard is continuing to conduct medical and logistical support operations at the Alabama Unified Command Operations Center.

For more information on Alabama National Guard activities, please contact the Alabama National Guard Public Affairs Office at [alngpao@mail.mil](mailto:alngpao@mail.mil), or 334-271-7244.

#### **Florida:**

The Florida National Guard has more than 2,895 soldiers and airmen in a mobilized status.

The FLNG continues supporting 10 community-based testing sites and mobile testing teams supporting special populations at long-term care facilities throughout Florida. To date, the FLNG has assisted in the testing of more than 67,840 individuals at community-based testing sites and collected 4,730 samples from long-term care facilities.

Additionally, more than 90 FLNG medical professionals are supporting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' alternate care facility at the Miami Beach Convention Center. The medial team conducted various advanced life support and basic life support staff training drills April 22.

For more information on Florida National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Maj. Caitlin Brown at [mary.c.brown26.mil@mail.mil](mailto:mary.c.brown26.mil@mail.mil), or 904-823-0164.

### **Maryland:**

The Maryland National Guard is preparing and delivering meals to emergency encampments for homeless people displaced due to COVID-19.

For more information on Maryland National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Maj. Kurt Rauschenberg at [kurt.m.rauschenberg.mil@mail.mil](mailto:kurt.m.rauschenberg.mil@mail.mil), 410-576-6179, or the Maryland National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [ng.md.mdarng.list.pao@mail.mil](mailto:ng.md.mdarng.list.pao@mail.mil).

### **Massachusetts:**

Massachusetts National Guard units have logged more than 23,000 miles transporting PPE to police, fire departments, hospitals and nursing homes.

For more information on Massachusetts National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Don Veitch at [don.h.veitch.civ@mail.mil](mailto:don.h.veitch.civ@mail.mil), 339-202-3950, or the Massachusetts National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [ng.ma.maarng.mbx.paoma@mail.mil](mailto:ng.ma.maarng.mbx.paoma@mail.mil).

### **Michigan:**

More than 795 Michigan National Guard soldiers and airmen are actively supporting the state's COVID-19 response, with an additional 6,600 service members ready to assist. Across 13 counties, members of the National Guard are supporting requests from local communities and state agencies. Response missions include food distribution, screening operations, reception and staging, supply and logistics management, state Emergency Operations Center staff augmentation, and alternate care facility support.

Joint Task Force – Michigan includes Guardsmen to coordinate National Guard response efforts across the state.

For more information on Michigan National Guard activities, please contact Capt. Andrew Layton, deputy PAO, at [andrew.b.layton.mil@mail.mil](mailto:andrew.b.layton.mil@mail.mil), or 517-481-7735.

### **Missouri:**

National Guard men and women are assisting the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in delivering food to students in rural areas.

For more information on Missouri National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Sgt. 1st Class. Joshua Breig at [joshua.h.breig.mil@mail.mil](mailto:joshua.h.breig.mil@mail.mil), 573-638-9846, or the Missouri National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [mo.ngpao@mail.mil](mailto:mo.ngpao@mail.mil).

## **Montana:**

Montana National Guard members are performing temperature screening at 11 airports and train stations across the state.

For more information on Montana National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Capt. Dan Bushnell at [daniel.r.bushnell.mil@mail.mil](mailto:daniel.r.bushnell.mil@mail.mil), or 406-324-3009.

## **New York:**

The New York National Guard has more than 3,625 personnel on mission across the state, joint task forces to support state and local governments with logistics management, warehouse operations. They also provide medical staff at Javits Center and New York City hospitals, and testing sites.

New York National Guard members continue to manage the Javits site as the unified command post for the multi-agency response. To date, more than 1,055 patients have received care at the Javits NY Medical Station.

- New York Air National Guard pararescue airmen, who are trained as emergency medical technicians, from New York's 106th Rescue Wing, are also assisting in city hospitals.
- The NYNG is supporting the alternate care facility at the South Beach Psychiatric Center on Staten Island. Additional forces are providing support at three other potential alternate care sites on Long Island or Westchester.
- NYNG continues to support 10 drive-through testing sites. Guardsmen supported more than 3,710 test appointments April 21, as bad weather caused a reduction in the number of people tested. The sites are located at: SUNY Stony Brook; Jones Beach State Park; Staten Island; Glen Island State Park in Westchester County; Anthony Wayne Service area in Rockland County; Lehman College and the Bay Plaza Mall in the Bronx; Aqueduct Racetrack in Queens; Flatbush in Brooklyn; and the SUNY Albany campus in Albany. Soldiers and airmen are collecting samples and providing general-purpose support at the testing locations.
- National Guard personnel continue packaging and distributing food today in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and Manhattan in New York City, and in Yonkers, providing 134,790 meals on April 21. To date, soldiers have distributed nearly 1.9 million meals.
- Similar missions resume today in Westchester County, where Guardsmen provided 78,311 meal packages and Albany County where 2,090 meals have been delivered to quarantined residents or picked up as of April 21.

- Soldiers helping to process and ship goods at the regional food bank in Schenectady delivered 292 meals April 21. A similar food distribution mission began April 21 in Chenango County, where 700 meals were distributed. An additional food support mission will begin April 24 in Montgomery County.
- New York soldiers and airmen continue conducting logistics missions, including warehousing and commodity distribution of medical supplies at six sites in the Hudson Valley, the Albany area, and Mohawk Valley.
- Soldiers distributed 3.5 million protective masks to five counties, and moved another 120 pallets of supplies.
- Hand sanitizer delivery continues to 16 locations today. April 21, 1,510 gallons were distributed 16 locations in the lower Hudson Valley. A total of 38,669 gallons of sanitizer have been delivered to local governments.
- The National Guard continues to provide logistics support to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of New York City. National Guard personnel are working with members of the Medical Examiner's Office to assist in the dignified removal of human remains when required. The support mission also includes assistance to the Westchester County Medical Examiner. A similar mission is expected to begin in Orange County.
- NYNG soldiers continue to man phones at two New York City call centers, including one for the New York City Division of Veterans Services. Soldiers also continue to provide administrative support at two New York City 911 call centers.
- Soldiers continue packaging COVID-19 test kits for the New York State Department of Health at the Wadsworth Laboratory in Albany. They assembled more than 24,800 kits April 21 for distribution across the state. The team has built 328,650 testing kits since starting the mission.

For more information on New York National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Col. Richard Goldenberg at [Richard.l.goldenberg.mil@mail.mil](mailto:Richard.l.goldenberg.mil@mail.mil), or 518-786-4581.

### **Oklahoma:**

The Oklahoma National Guard is distributing critical medical supplies from the Strategic National Stockpile warehouse to facilities state-wide.

For more information on Oklahoma National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Lt. Col. Geoffrey Legler at [geoffrey.j.legler.mil@mail.mil](mailto:geoffrey.j.legler.mil@mail.mil), 405-228-5037, or the Oklahoma National Guard Public Affairs Office email at 405-228-5212.

### **West Virginia:**

Currently, more than 695 West Virginia National Guard members are on duty supporting the state's COVID-19 response. To date, the WVNG has completed 582 missions across the state.

The Guard continues to make progress in testing all nursing home facilities in the state. This is a coordinated effort with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and the West Virginia Health Care Association.

WVNG personnel tested more than 120 staff members Morgantown Health and Rehabilitation, facility. This marks the third facility to undergo testing by the WVNG this week and to date, this team has tested 1,217 people as a part of their response mission.

The WVNG will also assist in COVID-19 testing at numerous state hospitals starting April 23 and week's end will have completed four of the seven locations in the state.

In addition to conducting COVID-19 testing for nursing homes, Guardsmen continue providing PPE wear training to long-term care facilities and plan to visit 10 locations April 23. Members are also providing assistance for COVID-19 drive through testing lanes and to date, have trained 637 stores, 2,778 personnel and 45 medical or long-term care facilities.

West Virginia Guard personnel assisting in sanitization lanes for first responder and public transport vehicles have sanitized 97 vehicles in two locations – Huntington and Charleston – which includes ambulances, police vehicles and public transport buses.

Guardsmen have delivered 500 sanitized N95 masks to Thomas Health Systems in Charleston. An additional 200 N95 masks will be sanitized today using the WVNG's mobile hydrogen peroxide vapor sanitizing trailer.

Task Force Sustainment continues their mission of distributing PPE to various county emergency managers and will pick up 32 drums of hand sanitizer to be broken down and distributed where needed.

Members of the WVNG packed 2,254 meals at the Mountaineer Food Bank and 360 family meals at the Facing Hunger Foodbank April 21. In addition, they will deliver 4,520 meals to Greenbrier, Raleigh and Ohio Counties April 22.

For more information on West Virginia National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Maj. Holli Nelson at [holli.r.nelson.mil@mail.mil](mailto:holli.r.nelson.mil@mail.mil), 304-561-6762, or the West Virginia National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [ng.wv.wvarng.mbx.public-affairs@mail.mil](mailto:ng.wv.wvarng.mbx.public-affairs@mail.mil).